

The University of Chicago

THE SOCIAL
STATUS OF CHARACTERS IN
MAGAZINE FICTION

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE LIBRARY
SCHOOL IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

1942

By
HANS MÜLLER

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THE SOCIAL STATUS OF CHARACTERS IN MAGAZINE FICTION

The Problem

Society may be regarded as a system of strata, each possessing a different amount of prestige. Individuals have the opportunity of moving up or down the social scale. The present discussion turns around the two phenomena: stratification of society and social mobility of individuals. How they are related to reading experiences is to be explored.

Social stratification appears both among readers and among the characters of magazine fiction. (1) If the readers of different publications are compared, they are found to differ (as groups) in their socio-economic status. Some publications attract a high proportion of readers from the "upper class"; others draw a majority of their readers from the "lower class." (2) If attention is focussed on the fiction content of publications, it is found that certain stories or novels deal primarily with "upper class" characters, whereas others tend to portray life in lower strata. The problem to be investigated may now be formulated as follows: Given different fiction publications of which the modal readers differ in social status, what corresponding differences are to be noted in the social status of typical fiction characters?

The problem can be answered more clearly in terms of magazine reading than of book reading, for the socio-economic status of magazine readers can be ascertained more easily and more reliably than that of book readers and the factors making for the popularity of a magazine are less obscure than those determining the appeal of a book. Successive issues of a magazine are generally read as long as the reading continues to yield certain expected satisfactions. A magazine is likely to lose many of its subscribers and regular purchasers if it changes the general pattern of its content too abruptly. To deviate too far from tested stereotypes may prove dangerous. Editors are, therefore, forced to a rather rigid uniformity of content. They think they know what their readers want to read about, and their policies are shaped accord-

ingly. Such policies rest largely upon inferences drawn from the characteristics of typical groups of readers.

The two basic variables in the conceptual scheme of our investigation are the reader and the publication. Our knowledge of readers is limited to socio-economic group characteristics, and no attempt is here made to extend or deepen this knowledge. Our aims are merely to add to our understanding of the role of publications by describing a part of their content in objective terms and tentatively to propose a few generalizations concerning the relationship of content elements to relevant readers' characteristics. Such generalizations serve to confirm (or disconfirm) what we have been led to expect as a result of case studies, personal testimony, or our own observations and hunches.

The Sample

In order to relate the content of publications to the social status of readers, four magazines were selected of which the purchasers showed different socio-economic complexions. According to surveys, the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post had more prosperous and fewer low-income readers than True Story and Liberty (Table 1). Besides these two pairs of magazines, a fifth title, Love Story, was chosen to represent a pulp magazine addressed to women; and a sixth title, Story, to represent a small circulation magazine the content of which was presumably not designed to appeal to any particular socio-economic levels.

The analysis was confined to fiction and covered twelve short stories in each of the six magazines. The typical story involved from three to five characters; and the total number of characters in the 72 stories amounted to 269. Most of the stories were published in the first half of 1940.

The purpose of the analysis was to describe the social status and related aspects of fiction characters. The basis for the description and hence for the central portion of the study was a schedule,¹ which focussed attention upon the social stratification of fiction characters but ignored literary qualities. The results of the analysis serve rather to indicate possibilities for further study than to establish statistically reliable generaliza-

¹See Appendix.

TABLE 1
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF READERS (PERCENTAGES)

	Ladies' Home Journal	True Story	Saturday Evening Post	Liberty
Standard of Living ^a				
Prosperous. . . .	13	2	17	8
Comfortable . . .	35	10	35	26
Getting-By. . . .	35	33	34	36
Poor.	17	55	14	30
Total. . . .	100	100	100	100
Occupation ^b				
Manual workers. .	46	72	42	56

^aSource: McCall Corporation, A Qualitative Study of Magazines (New York, 1941), p. 22.

^bSource: Macfadden Publications, Inc., Magazine Homes and Branded Merchandise (New York, 1937), p. 21.

tions. The generalizations tentatively proposed require confirmation by evidence obtained from larger samplings.

Social Status

Four levels of social status are being distinguished on the basis of occupation, conspicuous consumption, and patterns of conduct. The first status includes the highest income group and those with prosperous ancestors. The family heads are eminent professional men or big business executives. They live in mansions or luxurious apartments, employ many servants, engage in expensive sports, and attend formal parties frequently. The second status includes those who are fairly well-to-do professionals and business men of average success. They cultivate home and family life, conform to moral and religious standards, and send their sons and daughters to college. The third status includes small business people as well as clerical and sales personnel. Their conduct tends to be quite conventional, and they try, although sometimes in vain, to cultivate home and family life. Normally their children complete high school. The fourth status includes skilled and unskilled manual workers, servants, waitresses, and

people on relief. Their incomes are low. They show little respect for "middle-class" mores; their family ties are rather loose; and a majority do not complete high school.

The preceding definitions are not sharp, but they serve as rough instruments for stratifying the cast in short stories. In most instances a given character fits one of the four groups. If the groups are ranked according to the relative prestige in the community as a whole, the first status may be assumed to rank high and the fourth, low. Excluded from the fourfold grouping are artists, actors, military officers, criminals, and Negroes; they are counted under the heading "Other."

TABLE 2
SOCIAL STATUS OF CHARACTERS

Coverage	Social Status	Ladies' Home Journal	True Story	Love Story	Saturday Evening Post	Liberty	Story
Total Cast (Percentages)	First	37	8	57	22	..	13
	Sec'd	44	13	23	33	22	18
	Third	6	31	11	14	36	24
	Fourth	13	33	6	25	31	42
	Other	..	15	3	..	11	3
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Central Characters (Numbers)	First	4	..	5	2	..	1
	Sec'd	6	..	3	6	2	2
	Third	1	4	3	..	6	3
	Fourth	1	6	1	4	4	6
	Other	..	2	..	..	..	..
	Total	12	12	12	12	12	12

Table 2 shows that the social status (as defined) of characters generally follows the socio-economic level of the readers of the magazines in which the characters appear. The Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, both having many readers in the upper-income group (Table 1), have also a large proportion of their characters in the higher social levels; whereas True Story and Liberty, more popular among the low-income groups (Table 1), feature characters drawn from the lower social levels. The relationships hold for the total cast as well as for the central characters of short stories. The literary magazine, Story,

shows the heaviest representation of characters in the fourth status, suggesting that the more highly educated readers prefer accounts of the rough and raw phases of life, which they seldom meet in their own experiences. The love pulp contrasts sharply with the literary magazine. Over half of its total cast rank in the first status, and only 6 per cent, in the fourth status.

Love Story and True Story are both read largely by low-income groups. True Story readers apparently prefer stories about people with troubles like their own. Love Story readers, one may infer, would rather dream themselves into the social elite in order to escape their own troubles.

Wealth

Status may be defined in terms of wealth, prestige, and power. The designation "social status" combines several notions into a criterion whereby fiction characters can be grouped. For greater conceptual precision the characters may also be classed by wealth alone. Since wealth is known to correlate highly with other indices of social status, a classification by wealth will not differ greatly from a classification by prestige or power. The distributions in Table 3 show much conformity to those of Table 2. Ultrawealthy characters occur only in Love Story. Almost half of the total cast and three-fourths of the central characters in True Story are poor, whereas the Ladies' Home Journal and Love Story have very few poor characters. The Saturday Evening Post characters are more prosperous than those of Liberty, but the difference is smaller when the central characters are compared. The total cast of Story may be described as less prosperous than that of Liberty; the central characters in both Liberty and Story tend to be poor.

Corroborative Indices

The data show that the fiction characters in different magazines tend to be drawn from different social level. Several other differences than differences in income may be used to determine the characters' social status. For example, more professionals and fewer manual workers occur as characters in the Ladies' Home Journal than in True Story. Liberty has more than twice as high a proportion of manual workers among its characters than has

TABLE 3
WEALTH OF CHARACTERS

Coverage	Degree of Wealth	Ladies' Home Journal	True Story	Love Story	Sat. Eve. Post	Liberty	Story
Total Cast (Percent-ages)	Ultrawealthy	..	..	26	..	..	..
	Prosperous	47	12	34	33	11	21
	Moderate	37	37	36	35	44	42
	Poor	13	48	4	33	42	37
	Indeterminate	3	3	..	..	3	..
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Central Characters (Numbers)	Ultrawealthy	..	..	3	..	..	..
	Prosperous	5	..	2	3	1	1
	Moderate	6	3	6	4	6	5
	Poor	1	9	1	5	5	6
	Total	12	12	12	12	12	12

the Saturday Evening Post, whereas Love Story avoids manual workers. Car owners in the Saturday Evening Post are three times as numerous as the car owners in Liberty. True Story characters own fewer cars than do the Ladies' Home Journal characters. The largest proportion of characters owning cars, especially new models, is found in Love Story.

A larger number of servants are employed by the characters in the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post than in True Story or Liberty; servants are most numerous in Love Story. Drunkenness occurs with highest frequency in True Story and not at all in the Ladies' Home Journal, whereas polite forms of drinking occur very often in Love Story and not at all in True Story. The largest number of crimes and anti-social acts are committed by the characters of True Story, and none at all by the characters of the Ladies' Home Journal, the Saturday Evening Post, and Liberty. There are fewer accounts of harmonious family life and more depictions of family disintegration in the magazines read by low-income groups, particularly in True Story, where about 10 per cent of the characters undergo a succession of marital misadventures.

The more expensive sports (golf, polo, skiing, etc.) are practiced by the characters of the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post more frequently than by those of the other magazines. Characters worry about their economic future and money

matters more often in True Story than in the Ladies' Home Journal. Attempts at self-improvement, implying a desire to climb the social ladder, occur eight times in True Story and not at all in the Ladies' Home Journal. References to lack of cleanliness are found only in True Story and Story--magazines which devote much attention to the portrayal of low-income characters. Membership in a country club is usually a sign of opulence; four country-club members appear in the Ladies' Home Journal and four in the Saturday Evening Post, whereas stories in True Story and Liberty contain no country-club member.

Such data tend to validate the groupings of characters by "social status" and wealth.

Social Mobility

In theory, it is possible for anybody to improve his social status if he is endowed with beauty, talents, brains, or perseverance. Those, however, whose social ambitions are thwarted may find some compensation in reading about others like themselves who succeed. By identifying themselves with the successful heroes or heroines of stories, they can vicariously experience what the world has denied them in real life; and by comparing themselves with less successful characters, they may find another kind of emotional satisfaction.

Social mobility, as the term is here used, refers to an individual's movement from one "social status" to another. By definition, the "first social status" may be considered high, and the "fourth social status," low. Ascents to a higher level occur most frequently in True Story and Love Story, less frequently in the Saturday Evening Post and Liberty, and rarely in the Ladies' Home Journal and Story. Unsuccessful attempts to rise occur three times in True Story, twice in Liberty, and once each in Love Story and Story. Descents to a lower status occur three times in True Story and once in the Saturday Evening Post. A magazine's popularity among low-income groups is apparently increased if it carries stories about people who attempt, with or without success, to rise to a higher social level.

Causes of Social Mobility

The most frequent causes of changes in social status are

romantic love, perseverance, and physical charm, in the order named. In Love Story romance and beauty are almost the sole causes. In True Story there is considerable emphasis upon perseverance, will power, and hard work, which occur also, although with less emphasis, in Liberty, the Saturday Evening Post, and Story. Formal and informal education appear only in True Story. In the Ladies' Home Journal a social ascent is achieved mostly by talent or "personality." The latter traits perhaps reflect an "upper class" view of upward social mobility, whereas hard work, romance, and good looks may reflect a "lower class" view.

Inter-Group Attitudes¹

If we single out romantic love as one means of social climbing, we may ask between or within what social groups the love relationships in the stories take place. Most of the love relationships in Love Story occur between members of the upper class or between a member of the upper class and a member of the middle class. In the Saturday Evening Post the most frequent tendency is for love relationships to take place between two members of the middle class, whereas in Liberty they tend to take place either between members of the lower class or between a member of the middle class and a member of the lower class. In the Ladies' Home Journal the partners tend to be drawn from the upper and middle classes respectively, whereas in True Story and Story they tend to be drawn from the middle and lower classes respectively.

Three hypotheses suggest themselves: (1) In magazines with strong appeal to higher-income groups love relationships occur between members of the same social group. (2) In magazines with strong appeal to low-income groups the partners in love relationships are drawn from different social levels. (3) Love relationships are found most frequently between adjoining strata, next frequently between members of the same class, and least frequently

¹In the following discussion the term "upper class" refers to what has previously been designated as first status; "middle class" includes both the second and third status; and "lower class" is identical with the fourth status. These terms are used for convenience and involve no change in the definitions. The term "class" seems justified when evidence in the magazine content suggests that some levels are considered better or worse than others.

between the upper and the lower classes.

Closely related to the opportunity for social climbing is what might be termed "social perspective," that is, the way a member of one class looks at his own or at other classes. In analyzing the stories, instances were found in Liberty and True Story of people in the lower class looking up to the middle or upper classes with admiration, whereas resentment and disrespect toward the upper class are found in Love Story and Story. The desire to escape lower class life is common in True Story, whereas the desire to escape the middle class is more characteristic of Love Story.

True Story is undoubtedly the most class-conscious of the magazines. Here members of the middle class express pity for those who are inescapably bound to the lower class; frequently this attitude changes into one of distaste for everything with lower-class associations. Such an attitude is particularly vocal in characters who have managed to turn their backs upon their lower-class past and their former associates. The successful social climbers occasionally assume an air of aloofness toward lower classes so as to conceal the recency of their own elevation.

In the Ladies Home Journal such snobbery is more frequently expressed by the upper class toward the middle class, whereas in the Saturday Evening Post distaste and aloofness are expressed by the upper class toward the lower class. In Story similar attitudes are voiced, but contempt for the lower class is frequently combined with sympathy and pity. In this respect Story resembles True Story, except that the attitudes in Story issue from upper-class members rather than middle-class members.

In addition to the frequency-counts, upon which the statements in the preceding paragraphs are based, some evidence of inter-group attitudes may be presented in the form of quotations. Typical passages were selected from the different magazines and classed according to the attitudes expressed. Table 4 presents the attitudes and their several subdivisions together with their acceptors and targets. A sample of pertinent quotations follows.

1a. Admiration of a higher class.--Members of the lower class frequently admire the life of the middle class. What appeals to them particularly is the security and cleanliness of middle-class environments; and their feelings of admiration imply a desire toward the attainment of middle-class status. A True Story

TABLE 4

INTER-GROUP ATTITUDES EXPRESSED IN STORIES

Direction of Attitude	Type of Attitude	Expressed by What Class?*	Directed Toward What Class?*
(1) Looking up to a higher level	(a) Admiration (b) Resentment	Lower Lower	Middle Upper
(2) Looking down on a lower level	(a) Aloofness (b) Pity	Middle; Upper Middle	Middle; Lower Lower
(3) Looking at one's own level	(a) Proud identification (b) Resentment toward social climbers	Upper Middle; Lower	Upper Middle; Lower
(4) Looking at the whole social system	General awareness of class-lines	Upper	

*The classes are defined in foot-note 1, page 8.

character expresses this attitude in typical fashion:

"Some day," Toby said suddenly, "I'm going to get out of this place. Some day I'm going to get me a real job, and I'm going to live among decent people, and I'm going to have a house--with grass around it--and--"

"Gee, Toby," I know my eyes were shining as I turned to look at his serious, thoughtful young face, "do you think you ever can?"

.....
Sometimes we walked miles across the city to where the "nice" homes stood.²

1b. Resentment toward a higher class.--The underprivileged characters are commonly hostile toward those who enjoy wealth and security:

"You used to like the Merrills but lately. . . ."

"Lately, I see what a sap I am. They ain't lookin' down their noses at me. Damned snobs."

.....
"I'll bet they ain't forgot you was their hired girl neither."

"Gosh, I don't pay that no mind. I liked workin' for them."

"And I'd like to forget the whole damned bunch of them. Just because they got all the money in this burg, they think they can kick the rest of us around."³

²"Bad Wife," True Story, XLI (January, 1940), 18.

³Floy Murray, "Fathers Are Like That," Story, XVII (July-August, 1940), 22.

Feelings of resentment become bitter when snobbishness is openly expressed. In such cases the lower-class individual has to "swallow" the insult:

"You're not good enough for me."

This from the man I loved--and dreamed of marrying!

And Martin was right--hopelessly, indisputably right. I wasn't good enough for a man of Martin's background and education and brilliance. . . . What had I to offer him? . . . He had a secure New England family background, in this country for many generations; and expensive education at preparatory schools and two universities, he'd traveled around the world and had studied at the Sorbonne and in Italy. He had some means of his own.

He had everything! I had nothing.

I should have known better than to fall in love with him.⁴

Occasionally, as in this True Story tale, the character will put up a hard fight to overcome such social obstacles, and the snob in the story is punished by being made to fall far short of his pretensions.

2a. Aloofness toward a lower class.--Children of middle-class homes are frequently advised by their parents to play only with members of their own class and to avoid contacts with a lower level:

". . . Helen knows the value of money, indeed she does, living down there and with that father of hers. I don't like to mention it, Richard, but your father doesn't like the idea of your going to that house any too well. Of course, it's not Helen's fault but. . . well. . . ."

"Old Hank's all right. He treats me fine. He never did nothing bad that I saw. I never seen him do a single thing mean."

"But his poor family, Richard. He has no thought for them. Mrs. Wilson taking in washings, working herself to the bone."

"Gee, you're always harping on that, Mom. Can't you forget it just once?"⁵

This policy of isolation is marked in families that have risen from a lower level, for parents fear that their children may prefer their former associations:

". . . I was constantly trying to associate only with the more well-to-do and successful families in Asbury--and Toby accused me more than once of trying to pick the children's playmates for them.

⁴"I Didn't Know What Love Was All About," True Story, XLI (January, 1940), 32-33.

⁵Frank Brookhouser, "Easter Egg," Story, XVII (March-April, 1940), 20.

"Let them alone, Iris," he argued. "What if they do play with kids from relief families? Is that anything against them?"

"I've nothing against poor families," I answered carefully. "But our boys can do better. With the advantages we've worked so hard to give them, Jerry and Bob can associate with the very best people in town."⁶

2b. Pity toward a lower class.--The middle-class characters at times show compassion for the lower class in their sordid surroundings. The following is typical:

I asked him questions then; when he had come back from Oklahoma; where he lived. He made a vague gesture east. "Across the tracks," was all I could get out of him.

I shuddered. Across the tracks! There was nothing there but miserable shacks. Nobody but the most defeated, hopeless white people lived there among the colored people. Old Dad, living there! I couldn't bear the thought.⁷

3a. Pride in one's own class.--Upper-class characters are proud of their status. Marriages with members of a lower class are stigmatized:

She said, "Vanilla is first an orchid, Greta. But unless it's properly mated, it's no good."⁸

Her snobbery on the subject of birth was the fundamental trait of an exceptionally strong character. Julia knew that her own marriage to Sir William had never been forgiven, and she also knew whom the old lady blamed for it. . . . Sir William had been led astray, and it had been Julia who had so led him.⁹

The position of the upper class is, of course, vulnerable at other points, too. Nonconformity to the class conventions is censored:

". . . your name stands for everything that is decent and good. Your parents were aristocrats in every sense of the word, proud of their achievements, their friends and their position in this town. You destroyed, bit by bit, everything they stood for. . . ."¹⁰

3b. Resentment toward social climbers.--Conflicts arise

⁶"Bad Wife," op. cit., p. 110.

⁷"Anything for Me," True Story, XLI (January, 1940), 60.

⁸Marianne Barrett, "Man from the Past," Love Story, CLXIII (October 26, 1940), 35.

⁹Margery Sharp, "Julia Volunteers," Saturday Evening Post, CCXII (January 27, 1940), 70.

¹⁰Winifred Lowell Van Atta, "Dinner for Seven," Love Story, CLXIII (October 26, 1940), 72.

when two persons of the same class differ in their social aspirations. Social climbers are thus most unpopular in the class from which they seek to escape. Their out-group aspirations are strongly condemned:

"We could take a bus to Coney," Joe offered hopefully.

"What's the use of going way down to Coney when this nice pool is just around the corner? And I feel like going some place where it's nice and you see nice people."

Joe regarded her sadly. "You're changing, Annabelle. You're getting high-falutin' ideas. It's that Fifth Avenue Store where you work. Ninth Avenue isn't good enough for you anymore."

"Oh, it isn't that, Joe!" Annabelle hurried to say, and she put her hand consolingly on Joe's knee. "But--but I'd sort of like to go up in the world a little."¹¹

In the same magazine a middle-class character expresses resentment toward the upper-class aspirations of his middle-class girl:

"...when a girl is thinking about places like the Penguin Club, you can't expect her to get excited about settling down in a little one-roon-and-kitchenette apartment at the other end of the subway."¹²

4. General consciousness of class lines.--It is, finally, possible for characters to show a general awareness of the existence of class lines without specifying emotional attitudes. The title of a Ladies' Home Journal story runs: "Penny's Family Was Quite Definitely 'Upper Crust'. Tymothy Just Had Crust." This suggests that the distinction is accepted rather than resented. A quotation from another story in the Ladies' Home Journal reflects a similar point of view:

He wasn't like the rest of this gang, he'd told himself, all these Farover families. They had theirs, most of them. Their families had made the money years, generations, back and they'd had it always, probably, and their kids would, too, and their wives, no matter what happened to them.¹³

One may, of course, interpret expressions of this sort as resentment in disguise.

¹¹Oscar Graeve, "Thank You for a Lovely Time," Liberty, (February 3, 1940), 44.

¹²O. R. Cohen, "You Can't Help Love," Liberty, XVII (January 6, 1940), 39.

¹³N. B. Wildes, "Follow Your Heart," Ladies' Home Journal, LVII (February, 1940), 19.

Summary

The social status of characters in a sample of short stories in six magazines was described in terms of their wealth, occupation, car-ownership, employment of servants, degree of intoxication, violations of laws or mores, participation in sports, country club membership, social ambitions, and inter-group attitudes. A positive relationship was indicated between the social status of characters in each magazine and the socio-economic level of the modal readers of each magazine. The love pulp was noted as a possible exception, although trustworthy data concerning the readers of pulp magazines were not available.

A magazine's popularity among low-income groups seemed to be increased by stories about social climbers. Characters rise to higher class for different reasons in different magazines. Magazines addressed to low-income groups emphasize romance, physical charm, perseverance, hard work, will power, and self-education, whereas talent and "personality" are emphasized as causes of upward social mobility in magazines having a large proportion of prosperous readers.

In fiction magazines popular among high-income groups love relationships occur most frequently between members of the same social status, whereas in magazines circulating largely among low-income groups the partners in love relationships are drawn from different social levels.

Inter-group attitudes are frequently expressed in the stories. Higher social levels are viewed from below with both admiration and resentment; typical attitudes toward lower social levels are aloofness and condescending pity; members of the "upper class" are proud of their social status, whereas those seeking a higher level are snubbed by members of their own class. Quotations from the stories were presented to illustrate the attitudes.

APPENDIX

SCHEDULE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF SHORT STORIES

The purpose of the schedule is to systemize the observation of content elements related to social stratification and social mobility. Because of this somewhat restricted purpose the schedule does not bear comparison with other, more comprehensive schedules. In its construction two such schedules proved helpful in suggesting relevant categories: One of them had been used in an analysis of motion pictures;¹ the other one was designed for the analysis of popular stories in women's magazines.²

Before presenting an outline of the schedule a few comments should be made on the reasons for selecting the various categories.³

The sex and age distributions of characters may at first sight appear irrelevant. Certain expressions in the content, however, may find a sufficient explanation in the fact that a character is of a given sex or age rather than in the fact that such a character appears in a magazine addressed to a given group of readers. For instance, if the character in question is a young woman, upward social mobility is more likely to be attributed to romantic love, but to perseverance and hard work if the particular character is a middle-aged man, no matter at what group the magazine may be slanted.

Educational status is often directly related to the income level of characters. Rarely do the stories portray people who are unsuccessful despite a college education. To many, a college

¹Edgar Dale, The Content of Motion Pictures (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935).

²Unpublished schedule, prepared by Ruth Inglis, of the Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia.

³The schedule covers a larger number of aspects than have been reported upon in the present abstract. Those covered have been selected because of their special bearing on social stratification.

degree represents a symbol of parental affluence and, to say the least, suggests the absence of dire poverty.

Physical attractiveness represents a relevant item, since it is frequently attached to a lower-class character by way of compensation. Heroines tend to be poor but beautiful rather than poor and homely. In the pulp magazines, however, wealth and beauty frequently go together.

The category "social status" constitutes the heart of the schedule. It is defined as a relative position in the social system. Since the definition lacks sharpness, it seems advisable to record additional socio-economic attributes of a character. The schedule, therefore, includes items like occupation, amount of wealth, type and economic class of residence, car ownership, employment of servants, use of intoxicating beverages, participation in various types of recreation, presence or absence of self-improvement tendencies, of economic worries, and of cleanliness. All such categories are indices of social status.

In addition to such directly relevant attributes of the characters certain other items are included. Among them are the goals of characters, their marital status at the end and beginning of stories, their general family relationships, and the more or less violent crises they undergo. Underlying the selection of such categories is, of course, the hypothesis that their nature and frequency of occurrence would differ from magazine to magazine, depending upon the income-groups to which the magazines appeal.

Attention is also paid to the process of social mobility--its frequency of occurrence at various levels, the favorable conditions to which it is attributed, and the social attitudes which it tends to engender.

Outline of the Schedule

I. Features of characters

A. Sex

1. Male
2. Female

B. Age

1. 1-5 years
2. 6-13 years
3. 14-18 years
4. 19-25 years
5. 26-35 years
6. 36-49 years

- 7. 50-64 years
- 8. 65 years and over
- C. Education
 - 1. College attendance
 - 2. No more than high school education
 - 3. Probably less than high school education
- D. Physical attractiveness
 - 1. Very attractive
 - 2. Inconspicuous
 - 3. Unattractive but compensations
 - 4. Homely; repulsive
- E. Social status¹
 - 1. First status
 - 2. Second status
 - 3. Third status
 - 4. Fourth status
 - 5. Negroes
 - 6. Criminals; convicts
 - 7. Military officers
 - 8. Movie stars; actors
 - 9. Artists
- F. Occupation
 - 1. Housewife
 - 2. Young people without occupations
 - 3. Business
 - 4. Clerical
 - 5. Professional
 - 6. Manual workers
 - 7. Farmers
 - 8. Artists; actors; etc.
 - 9. Illegal occupations
- G. Amount of wealth
 - 1. Ultra-wealthy (millionaires; estate-owners)
 - 2. Prosperous; wealthy
 - 3. Moderate; getting-by
 - 4. Poor
- H. Type of residence
 - 1. Mansion; country estate
 - 2. Hotel
 - 3. Owned house
 - 4. Rented house
 - 5. Large, elegant apartment
 - 6. Small apartment
 - 7. Rooming house
 - 8. Dormitory (army; navy; school; etc.)
- I. Class of residence
 - 1. Old; aristocratic
 - 2. Fashionable; luxurious
 - 3. Fairly expensive
 - 4. Moderate
 - 5. Poor
- J. Car ownership
 - 1. New model
 - 2. Old model

¹Definitions are given in the text under the heading "Social Status."

- K. Servants
 - 1. One
 - 2. More than one
- L. Use of liquor
 - 1. Moderate
 - 2. Heavy drinking, but no intoxication
 - 3. Intoxication
- M. Types of recreation
 - 1. Dancing
 - 2. Giving or attending parties
 - 3. Attending the theater or opera
 - 4. Attending movies
 - 5. Playing games
 - 6. Listening to the radio
 - 7. Reading
 - 8. Playing musical instruments
 - 9. Foreign or domestic travel
 - 10. Riding in an automobile for pleasure
 - 11. Attending night clubs
 - 12. Knitting
 - 13. Watching sport events
 - 14. Swimming; hiking; boating; tennis
 - 15. Golf; riding; skiing; hunting; polo
- N. Crimes¹
 - 1. Murder
 - 2. Assault
 - 3. Threatening with weapons
 - 4. Gambling (operator)
 - 5. Property violation
 - 6. Drunken driving
 - 7. Embezzlement; forgery
 - 8. Bribery
 - 9. Drug traffic; bootlegging
 - 10. Abortion (physician)
 - 11. Prostitution
 - 12. Swindling
 - 13. Military offenses
- O. Violations of mores
 - 1. Illicit love
 - 2. Illegitimacy
 - 3. Suicide
 - 4. Abortion (patient)
 - 5. Lying
 - 6. Marital desertion
 - 7. Contempt for parents
 - 8. Loafing
- P. Goals (benefiting the self)²

¹Concerning violations of laws or mores it seems insufficient to indicate merely what kinds of violations occurred; it is also important to know whether violations were attempted or committed or whether a given character was only accused of a crime without being guilty. In addition it should be noted whether a violation was punished, rewarded, or implicitly approved.

²It should be indicated whether or not the characters were frustrated in their attempts at reaching their goals.

1. Winning another's love
 2. Illicit love
 3. Marriage for money
 4. Conquering a rival
 5. Professional, vocational, or financial success
 6. Gaining social prestige
 7. Proof of innocence
 8. Concealment of guilt
 9. Revenge
 10. Escape from dangers, pursuers, etc.
 11. Crime for gain
 12. Escape from present circumstances
 13. Self-preservation
 14. Excitement; activity
- Q. Goals (benefiting others)
1. Benefit to loved one
 2. Benefit to friend
 3. Benefit to relative
 4. Success in marriage
 5. Family welfare and honor
 6. Performance of duty
 7. Welfare of country
 8. National defense
 9. Apprehension of criminal
 10. Scientific achievement
 11. Welfare of community
 12. Welfare of mankind
- R. Marital status at beginning of stories
1. Single--under 18
 2. Single--over 18
 3. Engaged
 4. Married
 5. Divorced
 6. Separated
 7. Widowed
 8. Re-married
- S. Marital status at end of stories
1. Single--under 18
 2. Single--over 18
 3. Engaged
 4. Married
 5. Divorced
 6. Separated
 7. Widowed
 8. Re-married
 9. Reconciliation
- T. Family relationships
1. Chiefly to parents, brothers, sisters
 2. Chiefly to mate and offsprings
 3. No family relationship (orphan, etc.)
 4. No mention of relatives
- U. Social mobility
1. Upward
 2. Downward
- V. Miscellaneous
1. Much self-improvement is attempted
 2. Much interest in community affairs is shown
 3. Character worries much about economic future
 4. Character shows deficiencies in cleanliness

II. Features of story as a whole

A. Crises

1. Pregnancy
2. Birth (legitimate)
3. Birth (illegitimate)
4. Engagement
5. Breaking of engagement
6. Marriage
7. Divorce
8. Triangle situation
9. Death
10. Sickness; hospitalization
11. Accident
12. Police arrest
13. Court trial
14. Moving from one locality to another
15. Fighting
16. War
17. Prison term
18. Loss of job

B. Class and love cross-relationships

(Under this heading the "social status" of partners in love relationships is to be recorded)

C. Causes of social mobility

1. Romantic love
2. Marriage for money
3. Beauty; handsomeness
4. Musical talent
5. Athletic talent
6. Other talent
7. Formal education
8. Self-education
9. Perseverance
10. Accident
11. Counter-mores behavior
12. Crime
13. "Personality"

D. Social perspective

1. Looking up
 - a) Envy
 - b) Admiration
 - c) Resentment
 - d) Respect
 - e) Intention to deprive
 - f) Disrespect; contempt
2. Looking horizontally
 - a) Proud identification
 - b) Identification out of resignation
 - c) Desire to escape
 - d) Resentment of social climbers
3. Looking down
 - a) Sympathy; generosity; pity
 - b) Contempt; disgust
 - c) Pride; aloofness; exclusiveness

E. Locale

1. Foreign
2. Foreign and United States
3. New York City or other large city
4. Small town or suburb
5. Country

